

# Officer accused of mistreating Indians has record

By Randy Furst  
Staff Writer

A Minneapolis police officer accused of putting two Indians in the trunk of a squad car was suspended for six days in 1989 after taking two men to a secluded area near the Mississippi River north of downtown, allegedly to intimidate them.

In ordering the suspension of Marvin Schumer, an internal affairs investigator said similar misconduct in the future would be grounds for further discipline, possibly firing.

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According to internal affairs records from 1989 obtained by the Star Tribune, the two men said they were taken to the area by Schumer and threatened in separate incidents. One said he was choked by Schumer; the other said Schumer hit him with a fist. Schumer denied manhandling either. Neither of the two men was arrested.

Schumer told investigators that it was his practice to take troublemakers out of the downtown area to secluded areas.

Former Deputy Chief Douglas Smith wrote in a letter to Chief John Laux that Schumer's actions were "misguided," adding, "His actions border on extra-legal and cannot be condoned."

Police records indicate that both men picked up by Schumer were black.

Assistant Hennepin County Attorney

Pete Conners declined to prosecute Schumer because of a lack of corroborating witnesses. But Conners wrote internal affairs officials that Schumer admitted to taking the men to the river without legal authority. "If Officer Schumer continues with this practice in the future, it may be appropriate for you to submit these cases to the Hennepin County attorney's office for consideration of false imprisonment charges," Conners wrote.

Schumer and Mike Lardy, both officers in the Fourth Precinct, were re-

lieved of duty with pay on April 22 for transporting two allegedly intoxicated American Indians in the trunk of their squad car to Hennepin County Medical Center on the night of April 17. Police are investigating the incident, saying charges may be filed with the city or county attorney's office. Schumer has worked in the Police Department for six years, Lardy for two years.

Larry Leventhal, attorney for the two Indians, Charles Lone Eagle and

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# Police/ Attorney says disclosure may hurt city's case

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John Boney, said last night that the documents "show that the city was indeed highly negligent in allowing Schumer to prey upon the public when he had been shown to have previously abused his position and to have brutalized people. He should not have been allowed to present himself as a police officer and carry the authority that he did."

Sgt. Al Berryman, president of the Minneapolis Police Federation, said last night that the 1989 allegations against Schumer "were not allegations that he hurt anybody, only that he drove somebody out of the downtown area and told them not to come back to downtown."

Deputy Chief David Dobrotka said last night that Schumer's record "cannot be used to determine guilt or innocence" in the matter of hauling

the two men in the car trunk. But Dobrotka said "once that decision has been made to determine the appropriate disciplinary action, then you can go back and look at a person's discipline record [and] . . . the penalty for a particular offense could be enhanced."

Police investigative records indicate that among the allegations sustained against Schumer were complaints of mistreatment and violation of department rules. Smith wrote that "other allegations of inappropriate conduct and use of force are not provable," and noted that Schumer's "work record and statistics are excellent."

Smith wrote that one of the men Schumer brought to the river had been arrested numerous times and was "a menace to the community," while the other "was taken off the street without provocation."

The second man said Schumer told him that he was going to take him down to the river to "rough me up."

"He reached in and grabbed me by my neck and was choking me and asked me if I wanted to play tough guy now, and every time I was speaking to him, he choked me harder and harder until I couldn't talk and I was getting dizzy," the man told investigators. Schumer denied choking or threatening the man.

When investigators asked Schumer whether it was "a regular practice of yours to take troublemakers to this secluded or other areas?" he responded, "Yes, the reason for doing it and taking troublemakers to this area is that it gets them away from the general public who are usually the victims of their harassment and crimes, and that it is done in an attempt to clean up the downtown/Hennepin [Av.] area."

The other man said he was picked up by Schumer on 7th St. near Hennepin Av. and driven to a secluded area near the river. He said Schumer told him "we'll see how tough you are" and said Schumer told him he was going to kill him. He said Schumer pulled him from the squad car and later hit him. Schumer told investigators that he saw the man on the street shouting obscenities, picked him up and drove him to the secluded area. He said he did not mistreat or threaten the man.

**Staff writer Kevin Duchscher contributed to this report.**